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Profaneness,

*In a Description and a Rebuke of it,
taken out of the Right Reve-
rend Bishop Hopkins Expositi-
on of the Ten Commandments.*

Profaneness, is the slighting and neglect-
ing of things Holy and Sacred. Who-
soever is guilty of this, let his out-
ward Demeanor in the World, be
as fair, and as plausible as *Morality* and *Hypocrisis*
can adorn it, yet he is a Profane Per-
son.

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The Spiritual Sacred things, are,
 First, *God in his Nature and Essence*. Whom
 we Profane when we entertain any Blasphemous or Unworthy Thoughts of Him.

Secondly, *God in his Name*. Which we
 Profane, when we rashly in our trivial Discourses, bout out that great and terrible Name, at which all the Powers of Heaven and Hell tremble. It doth sadly fore-bode the growing Profaneness of the next Age, that Children be *Taught* or *Suffered* to call upon God in their Play, before they be taught to call on him in their *Prayers*.

Thirdly, *God in his Attributes*. Which we Profane, when our Affections or Actions are opposite or unsuitable. *e. g.* Our *Unholiness* profaneth his *Holiness*. Our *Despondence* profaneth his *Omnipotence*. Our *Hypocrisie* profaneth his *Omniscience*. Our *Despair* profaneth his *Mercy*. Our *Presumption* profaneth his *Justice*. Our *sinful Policy* profaneth his *Wisdom*. Our *Security* notwithstanding his Threatnings, and our *Slothfulness* notwithstanding his Promises, do profane his *Truth*. *Every Sin is a kind of Profaneness, a Contempt of the Excellencies of God*. How much more that which is sinned for nothing, and desieth his Wrath and Justice without a Temptation?

What

What should tempt the Impious Buffoon to deride *Religion*? Travest the *Holy Scriptures*? And turn whatsoever is *Sacred* and *Venerable* into Burlesque and Drollery? And,

Fourthly, *The Time God hath set apart and Consecrated for his Service.* Unto the holy observance whereof God hath condescended to use three cogent Arguments; viz.

1. His own *Example* in Resting on it.

2. The *Liberal portion of Time* that He hath allowed us for the Affairs of this present Life.

3. The *Dedication* of this day unto his immediate Service. [*Vid. p. 207.*] But we profane it, when we do not Rest from the *common works* of our ordinary Callings. And do not diligently and conscientiously attend upon all God's Ordinances, appointed to be performed on this day. And that whether in *Publick, Private, or Secret.*

The Day is not done, when the Church dissolves. *The whole of it is Holy to the Lord.* Walks and Visits are not to be the Evening Work of the Sabbath; but holy, and spiritual Conferences. Those who have Families to look after, be best employed, in seeing them spend the vacant time of the Sabbath in Holy Exercises. *Sc.* Reading the Scripture, giving an account what Truths they have been taught, joyning with them in Praises and Prayer unto God. In

all of these, in their Courses and Order, till Night calls for Repose.

Fifthly, *The Ordinances of Jesus Christ.* Which we profane, when we Neglect, or are Remiss in our attendance upon them.

Some particular Characters of a Profane Person here follow.

First, *He is a Profane Person that thinks and speaks but slightly of Religion.* Religion, our chiefest Excellency, the Crown of our Being.

But have we not many, who deride Piety, and make a scoff of Religion? Who take up their Religion by Chance, never examining it. Thinking that any may suffice whatever it be. Secretly despising the holiness and strictness of others; thinking they make more ado to get to Heaven than needs. But indeed, they are not too precise; but these are too Profane, who condemn Religion as unnecessary and superfluous.

Secondly, *He is a Profane Person who neglects the Publick Worship of God, when he hath opportunity and ability to attend it.* Gods special Presence is in two places, Heaven and the Church.

Thirdly, *He is a Profane Person who neglects the performance of Religious Duties in private.*

till *vate.* Every House ought to be a Temple,
 rifest. ought to be a *Priest*, to offer to God the
 or daily Sacrifice of Prayers and Praises. Such
 em. *Profane Families* as those which are without
 them, *God ranks with Infidels and Heathens,*
 ane and devotes them to the same common *Destru-*
ction.

and In the Morning, Prayer is the Key that
 our opens to us the Treasury of Gods Mercies and
 Blessings. In the Evening, it is the Key that
 Be. shuts us up safe under his Protection and Safe-
guard.

ety, Excuses are vain, and cannot take off
 up your Obligation.

it. Are you *Ignorant*? Many are the helps
 r it that God hath provided you. Are you *in-*
 and cumbred with your *Worldly Affairs*? The
 take weightier they are, the more need you have
 But to ask Counsel and Direction of God. Are
 these you *Bashful and Modest*? Alas, Be ashamed
 as to Sin, be ashamed to Talk Loosly, be a-
 shamed to Neglect thy Duty before thy
 Family; but be not ashamed to Pray, and
 do thy Duty. Our Saviour hath told us,
 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and
 of my words, in this adulterous and sinful Gene-
 ration, of him also shall the Son of Man be
 ashamed when he cometh in the Glory of his Fa-
 ther, with the Holy Angels., Mark 8. 38.

What

What will become of them who are ashamed of their Duty.

Fourthly, *He is a Profane Person that performs Holy Duties slightly and superficially.* Our whole Hearts must go into our Holy Duties. And the strength and vigor of our Spirits must diffuse themselves into every part of them, to animate and quicken them.

Sacrifices of old, were commanded to be offered up with *Fire*. And no other Fire could sanctifie them but that which shot it self down from Heaven. The which was ever after to be kept burning for that use. Our Christian Sacrifices of Praise and Prayer must be offered with *Fire*; and that Fire must be darted down from Heaven. The Celestial Flame of Zeal and Love, which comes from Heaven, and hath a natural Tendency to carry up our Hearts and Souls thither.

But indeed commonly our Duties are either offered up with *strange, unhallowed Fire*; some unruly Passion of Hatred, Self-love, and Pride: Or else they are very *Cold and Heartless*. Our Prayers are dull and yawning, and drop over our Lips without any Spirit or Life in them.

Fifthly, *He is a Profane Person that performs Holy Duties for Worldly Ends and Advantages.*

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vantages. For what greater contempt of God can there be than to make his service truckle under base Designs? A Hypocrite is the most profane Wretch that Lives. He entitles the Holy God unto the Wickedness he commits, and makes God the Patron of his Sin. And the Wound that Religion receives from Hypocrites, is far more dangerous than that which open Sinners inflict upon it.

When he that speaks *Scripture*, lives *Devilism*, this tempts Men to think that all Religion is but Mockery.

Sixthly, *He is a Profane Person who makes what God hath Sanctified, Common and Unhallowed.* And have we not many such profane Persons! Many that abuse the Holy and Reverend Name of God about *frivolous* matters? Who make mention of him in their *idle Chat*, but are Mute and Dumb when any thing should be spoke to his Praise?

There are but two Ends that can warrant and justify the use of any of God's Names, Titles, and Attributes. And they are, 1, *Gods Glory*, and, 2, *The Edification of our selves and others.* Gods terrible Name is so full of Glory and Majesty that it should never be uttered, but where the Discourse is Serious and Weighty. *Those who read it with*

with Oaths and Blasphemies, ought to be punished by the Judges. And, would to God, Law were put in severe Execution, to cramp the Black Tongues of all such Profane Wretches.

Others fill up their Familiar Tattles with the Name of GOD and LORD making them to express some *small Wonderment*, and fill up a gap in their Discourses. These, God will not hold Guiltless. He holds himself contemned, and will revenge the Dishonour that they do him by it.

What ! Will you dare to bolt out the great Name of God *without considering it* Is it a Name to be sported with ? To be tossed to and fro upon every light and vain Tongue ? Whenever we mention it, we ought to bow our Hearts in the deepest prostration before it ; to which all the Powers in Heaven and Earth bow down with most humble Veneration.

Canst thou in Duty easily compose thyself to Reverence the holy and dreadful Name. When thou hast accustomed thyself to Name him *without any Respect* in the common Discourses ?

Let me beseech you, O Christians, as you tender his Glory, of which He is jealous whensoever you speak of God, or but mention his Name. Do it with an Ho

ly Awe and Dread of his Divine Majesty.

And you, who are *Masters of Families*, and have Children, beware that you stop in them the growing Sin of profaning God's Name!

To attest any thing by *their Faith*, or by *their Truth*, is a wicked Oath. More Impious in effect, than Louder ones. The By-word *Marry*, is no less than Swearing by the Virgin *Mary*. It is a notable Device of the Devil to bring foolish masked words into common use. 1. That they may Swear who use them, though they know it not. And, 2. That by using unknown Oaths, they may be brought in time to take up known ones.

Vehement Affeверations, be also dangerous beginnings of Oaths. By the Customary use of them, we shall insensibly be tripping upon an Oath. [This, and more, see p. 163. and up and down on the third Commandment.] To return,

Many Profane *Gods Sabbaths*, invade impiously the Time that he hath set apart for himself, his own Worship and Service. Many make the Bible their *Jest-Book*; prostituting those Expressions which God hath sanctified to convey to us the knowledge of Himself, and of Eternal Life, unto the

Laughter and Mirth of their loose Companions.

Those very words which the *Holy Ghost* inspired for the *Edification* of the Church, the *Devil* inspires into these profane Wretches for their own *Damnation*, and the *Damnation* of those that have pleasure in such horrid Profaneness.

Seventhly, *He is a Profane Person, who despiseth Spiritual Privileges and Enjoyments.* Upon this very account, the Scripture sets a black and indelible Brand upon *Esa* Lest there be any *Fornicator, or Profane Person, as Esau, who for one morsel of Meat sold his Birthright, Heb. 12. 16.* They are Profane, who vilify the *Ministry* in Themselves and in Others. Who dishonour God's *Embassadors.* And who despise his *Children*, whom God so highly honours as to adopt them into his Family. *He who despiseth him that is Begotten, despiseth him likewise that Begetteth.* Contempt of *Children and Servants*, argues secret contempt of the *Master and Father.*

Now lay these things to your own Hearts and bring them home to your own Consciences, and see whether you are in none of these particulars guilty of Profaneness!

Do none of you *think slightly of Religion,*
accounting it a Politick Design, or a Need-
less Preciseness?

Are none of you *Negligent in the Publick*
Worship of God? Nor in *Private and Family*
Duties?

Or, if you perform them, *is it not very*
carelessly and perfunctorily?

Or, if you seem Zealous in them, *is not*
your Zeal excited by some Temporal Advan-
tages and Worldly Designs?

Do you not *make that Common and Un-*
holy, which God hath made Holy? Either,
by *Abusing his Name, Polluting his Sab-*
baths, or Vilifying his Word in your ordina-
ry Raillery?

Lastly, Do none of you *Despise Spiritual*
Priviledges, and the Persons who are invested
with them?

If you do, *how fair soever your Lives and*
Actions may be; although you may think
the *rude debauched Sinner* at a vast distance
from your selves, and account him the only
Profane Person; yet certainly *this black*
stile

stile belongs as properly to you. And you are
 profane Violaters of the First Command-
 ment. Which requires you to take the
 Lord for your God, and accordingly to Ho-
 nour and Reverence Him, and whatsoever
 appertains unto Him.

F I N I S.

London, Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst* at the *B*
ble and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapside* ne
Mercers-Chapel. 1692.

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